

party to a seven-day series of events. This year, the Pride Parade will be held June 7–8, 2003 and will culminate into a street fair on Pennsylvania Avenue, attended by people of all backgrounds from the District and the region. I have marched in the Pride parades since coming to Congress, and I have seen the parade grow bigger and better. In 2002, I marched with over 120 contingents in the parade. More than 200,000 people attended the street fair in the shadow of the Capitol; and hundreds of vendors and organizers had stalls, booths, and pavilions. The street fair featured over five hours of local entertainers and national headline performers.

The citizens of the District of Columbia and I feel a special affinity to any American who does not share all the rights and privileges enjoyed by most citizens of the United States. I note that it has been eight years since the Majority changed a historic rule and the District of Columbia lost the first vote we ever won on the floor of the House of Representatives, in the Committee of the Whole, the least we were entitled to. I remind this body that our city of 600,000 residents is the only jurisdiction in the United States subject to "Taxation Without Representation."

My Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered constituents feel this denial more acutely than most. Every April 15th they bear all the responsibilities of our democracy yet are denied complete access to its power to redress the injustices that befall Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Americans. Today many are serving their country in Iraq and in the military throughout the world, as District residents have in every United States' war without a vote on war and peace, or any other issue.

Similarly, Congress has not yet protected sexual orientation from discrimination in our country. Despite increasing reports of violence and physical abuse against Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered Americans, Congress has not enacted protections against hate crimes. Congress must pass the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA). Congress must pass the Hate Crimes Prevention Act. Congress must pass the Permanent Partners Immigration Act. Congress must pass the No Taxation Without Representation Act.

In June, we will rejoice in the accomplishments of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered community. We also will remember those who live on only in our hearts and prayers. As we "Celebrate Pride" and reflect, we must continue the fight for full democracy for the District of Columbia and full civil rights for the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgendered people in the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask the House to join me in saluting the 28th Annual Capital Pride Festival; its organizer: Whitman-Walker Clinic, and the sponsors and volunteers whose dedicated and creative energy make the Capital Pride Festival possible.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. SAM GRAVES

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mr. GRAVES. On Monday, May 19, 2003, I was unavoidably delayed and thus missed roll-

call votes 192, 193, and 194. Had I been present, I would have voted "nay" on rollcall 192, H. Con. Res. 166; "yea" on rollcall 193, H.R. 1018; and "yea" on rollcall 194, H. Con. Res. 147.

RECOGNIZING OPERATION APPRECIATION

HON. GEORGE RADANOVICH

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize Operation Appreciation, a community event sponsored by news talk radio, KMJ580, which will be honoring individual citizens along with a special recognition to the men and women from the Lemoore Naval Air Station who served in Operation Iraqi Freedom. Operation Appreciation took place on Saturday, May 17, at the California Army National Guard in Fresno, CA. The funds raised will benefit the Veterans Administration.

The individuals being honored provided invaluable service by volunteering their time on-air to keep the citizens of the Central Valley of California informed and up-to-date on the interests and actions of the war. Those recognized were: Col. John Summerville (retired)—Marines, Military Strategist, Victor Davis Hansen, Professor Bruce Thornton from California State University, Fresno, and Brig. General Ed Munger (retired)—Army.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to recognize and applaud Operation Appreciation and the individuals who were honored. I urge my colleagues to join me in extending our appreciation and best wishes to our military, veterans, the honorees, and KMJ580 radio.

MECKLENBURG DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

HON. SUE WILKINS MYRICK

OF NORTH CAROLINA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mrs. MYRICK. Mr. Speaker, two hundred and twenty-eight years ago on this date, May 20, 1775, the Scotch-Irish residents of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina declared themselves no longer subject to British rule. The day after the battle of Lexington, the Committee of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, which was led by the Polk and Alexander families, drafted a document we refer to today as The Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence. In short, this document declared that the citizens of Mecklenburg County had dissolved all ties with Great Britain, and declared itself free and its people independent. One of my staff members, Andy Polk, is a direct descendant of the Polk and Alexander families.

As a member of Congress who represents much of Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, I must say that I am very proud to represent an area that is so rich in history and so dedicated to freedom. Ever since May 20, 1775, the citizens of Mecklenburg County have been a freedom loving people who have laid down their lives so that others might experience the greatness of being a free people, who have

the right to govern themselves as they see fit. Many of these men who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration went on to fight and die in the American Revolution to secure the liberties and freedoms we have today.

I am happy to note that in honor of this date the great state of North Carolina has placed May 20, 1775 on its flag and on its seal to honor the men who signed the Mecklenburg Declaration. And to further honor them I ask that their names be placed in the Congressional Record. Such men should not ever be forgotten, lest we forget the freedom we hold so dear.

Signers of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence: General Thomas Polk, Robert Irwin, William Graham, Hezekiah Alexander, John Flennekin, John Queary, Matthew McClure, David Reese, Ephraim Brevard, Adam Alexander, Abraham Alexander, John Phifer, John Foad, Ezra Alexander, Waightstill Avery, John Davidson, Hezekiah J. Balch, James Harris, Richard Barry, Charles Alexander, Benjamin Patton, Richard Harris, Neil Morrison, William Kennon, Henry Downs, Zaccheus Wilson, and John McKnitt Alexander.

SPEAKING OUT FOR FAIRNESS IN TELECOMMUNICATIONS

HON. CIRO D. RODRIGUEZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 20, 2003

Mr. RODRIGUEZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to express my concerns about the ongoing delay in the release of telecommunications competition rules. It has been three months since the Federal Communications Commission issued their ruling on the regulation of broadband technology, and we are still waiting for the rules of competition determined by that ruling to be released.

This delay leaves local phone companies and internet service providers without the information they need to make good business decisions. Without knowing the rules under which they must operate, they cannot make determinations about how and where to invest in research and development of new services and new technologies. However, the ultimate losers in this situation are American families and businesses who want and need reliable broadband service.

The telecommunications industry is the backbone of our nation's economy. Not only are hundreds of thousands of America's workers employed in telecommunications, but the services that these companies provide are vital to every business in the United States. Without the ability to quickly and accurately move data, commerce is threatened, and our position in the global marketplace is weakened.

I urge the FCC to act immediately to release the rules for competition. Without these rules, the telecommunications industry cannot move forward with development of the broadband infrastructure that will keep our economy and our nation on the path to recovery and growth.